

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action of March 8, 2005, has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Claim 1 has been amended and new claims 7-16 have been added. Claims 1-16 remain pending in this application. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicates that objected to dependent claims 5 and 6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants thank Examiner for indication of allowable subject matter. In response, Applicants have re-written previous dependent claim 5 in independent form as claim 15 and have re-written former dependent claim 6 as new claim 16. New claim 16 depends from claim 15. No new matter has been added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fell (U.S. Pat. No. 2,940,784, hereinafter Fell). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

In order to reject a claim as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102, a single prior art reference must teach every aspect of the claimed invention. MPEP § 706.02. Claim 1 recites a securing device with a distance detector that is “linearly slideably displaced relative to the tubular piece.” Fell fails to teach or even suggest a distance detector that is “linearly slideably displaced relative to the tubular piece.” Rather, Fell merely discloses “rotational displacement” of a pair of threaded sleeve 9 and screw 16 relative to one another. “The external threads 22 on the screw 16 match the threads 11 in the sleeve 9 so that the screw 16 can be threaded in the lower end portion of the sleeve, as shown in Fig. 1.” See Fell, col. 2, lines 6-9 and Figs. 1 and 3. As such, Fell fails to teach or disclose a distance detector “linearly slideably displaced relative” to a tubular piece.

Additionally, Fell fails to teach or disclose an aforementioned distance detector “linearly slideably displaced relative” to a tubular piece “in response to the distance detector contacting the structural component.” Specifically, Fell does not teach or disclose displacement of a

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distance detector in response to "contacting the structural component." In contrast, displacement is accomplished in Fell by rotation of screws. See Fell, col. 2, lines 40-43. Claim 1 is therefore not anticipated by Fell, as Fell fails to teach or suggest a distance detector "linearly slideably displaced relative to the tubular piece" as recited.

Claims 2-6 are allowable for all the reasons given above concerning their respective base claims, and further in view of their specific recitations that have not been shown to be in (or obvious from) the prior art.

New Claims

New claims 7-16 are directed to a securing device for a structural component to be secured to a panel having similar features as claim 1. New claims 7-16 are allowable over the art of record as the art of record fails to teach or disclose each and every feature of these new claims as recited. The claims are supported by the specification as filed. No new matter has been added.

CONCLUSION

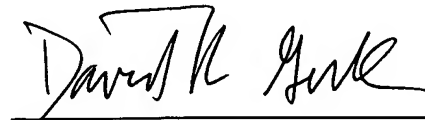
All rejections having been addressed, Applicants respectfully submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicit prompt notification of the same. However, if for any reason the Examiner believes the application is not in condition for allowance or there are any questions, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (202) 824-3000.

Respectfully submitted,

BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.

Dated this 8th day of June, 2005

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